

December 1, 1969

Dr. L. C. Dunn
635 West 247th St.
Bronx, New York

Dear Dunny,

I have had a look at your chapter in the new book edited by Caspari & Ravin. First I read your first few charming paragraphs. Then I turned to see what you had to say about Miescher. First there is the sentence on page 57: "Yet such was the foresight or the breadth of view of a medically trained chemist like Friedrich Miescher, who first isolated a nucleic acid that even in 1871 he supposed it might have a genetic function." Then there is a paragraph on Miescher on page 59 in which there comes this sentence: "He soon isolated the same acidic compound from the sperm of other animals and suggested that nuclein was the active genetic material of ther sperm."

I am sorry to say that these statements which I quote are not in accord with the documents - Miescher's papers and letters. The actual events are very interesting and significant for the history of our knowledge of heredity. I did my best to give an account of what happened in my paper in The Scientific American, to which you refer.

All my best to you and Louise.

AEM:ggl

Alfred E. Mirsky